

Dear Dr. Richmond,

I appreciate your concern regarding the latest issue of the Journal of Schenkerian Studies and its reception by the scholarly community. I will address your questions in two separate categories; in addition, I will also express my own reflections on the situation.

1. What was the board's role in the publication of these essays? Was the board involved in the solicitation or review of these essays?

To clarify, my answer pertains to the essays in the "Symposium on Philip Ewell's SMT 2019 Plenary Paper, 'Music Theory's White Racial Frame'," not the other articles in the same volume.

I cannot speak for the entire editorial board, so I will start by explaining what my personal role was in the publication of the "Symposium" essays. This consisted of three parts:

a) Beginning on November 15, 2019, I participated in an email exchange, initiated by Timothy Jackson, that eventually led to the Call for Responses that produced much of the "Symposium." The exchange began with Jackson's email titled "Not everyone was enthusiastic about Ewell's talk," and it was sent to a number of UNT music theory faculty. The emails were an exchange of opinions on Ewell's keynote talk. They led to another string of emails, which were directly related to the Call for responses. This string was initiated by Levi Walls, whose initial email (November 25, 2019) was sent to several theory faculty, including some that are *not* on the JSS editorial board. This second email exchange led to the formulation of the Call. I discussed the formulation with the others, but didn't make any substantive suggestions. On my part, I approved the Call on the same day, Monday 25, 2019. After that, I lost track of what happened with the further drafts of the Call, and only received the official Call for Responses via SMT-announce list (on December 31, 2019), which is the standard way to distribute music theory information.

b) Approximately at the same time when the first email exchange began, that is in mid-November, Jackson began to talk about soliciting responses to Ewell's talk, to be published in the next issue of JSS (which is what ended up happening). I stress that this was *before* the Call for Responses was published via SMT-announce, and before it was even decided that such a call would be sent out. I think (though I cannot be entirely sure) that this informal solicitation happened as part of email exchanges between Jackson and Schenkerian scholars in and outside UNT. Jackson sent to me excerpts from some of these opinion emails in the first email string (initiated on November 15, see above). There were more emails in November and December, including an email string "German scientific racism," which Jackson sent just to me. In the process of these discussions, Jackson suggested that I contact my former PhD adviser William Rothstein, a notable Schenkerian, to ask if he would like to contribute a response to Ewell's paper. Rothstein refused to do so, in an email to me from December 3, 2019. c) At some point in the spring 2020, Walls sent me a draft of the table of contents for the "Symposium." I said that the titles looked inconsistent. (They still do, in print.) I was never asked to look at the essays themselves, only at their titles.



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This concludes my participation in the JSS “Symposium on Philip Ewell’s SMT 2019 Plenary Paper.” I knew that several people were working on their responses to Ewell, but never saw any of these essays, at any stage of their preparation or publication. The next time I heard about the “Symposium” was in a Facebook post on Saturday, July 25. The first time I saw these essays in print was the next day, July 26, when a Facebook friend distributed a scanned pdf copy of the “Symposium.”

In summary, I was involved in the solicitation of these essays (though not those that were actually published), but I was not involved in their review.

The facts having been discussed, I now wish to express my own reflections on the process.

First of all, it is hard to distinguish between three things here: (1) what the JSS editorial board did, (2) what the broader Schenkerian community did, and (3) what UNT theory faculty did, in email conversations with Jackson and others. Jackson’s and Walls’s emails, at least those I myself got, were addressed not so much to the editorial board, but to UNT faculty, including those (like Andrew Chung) that are NOT on the editorial board. At the same time, Jackson alluded, more than once, to other Schenkerians (without naming them) who agreed with his own opinion. In retrospect, I can say that Jackson’s (and to a certain extent Stephen Slottow’s) actions produced an atmosphere of “we Schenkerians do not agree with Ewell’s plenary talk,” and this atmosphere was created not just by emails, but also by in-person conversations in UNT music building hallways. To be sure, Jackson himself expressed his disagreement very clearly in his emails, a lot of which later became part of his essay in JSS “Symposium.” Jackson was “dragging” people into his “Symposium” project, and they (I should actually say “we”) followed with various degrees of enthusiasm or reluctance. I stayed away from active participation in it as much as I could manage it without explicitly telling Jackson and Slottow “Sorry, I don’t want to be involved.”

As for the rest of the editorial board—the members who are *not* on the UNT faculty—I simply don’t know whether they were involved in the formulation of the Call for Responses, or in any other stages of the process. The reason is that there was never a *formal* solicitation of opinions or essay reviews from the editorial board members.

In retrospect, I regret that I did not contact Ewell to ask if he would like to write a response to the responses, or to simply inform him about what is happening in JSS. A lack of such timely contact with Ewell on the part of JSS editorship is part of what is currently being condemned on social media. In fact, I did think of contacting him in December 2019, partly because he is a

3

long-time friend and a former mentor of mine. But it was a busy time at the end of the Fall semester, I was recovering after an illness, and most of all I thought that such contact ultimately should be made by the editors and the advisory board (that is, Graf, Wall, Jackson, Slottow). So I didn’t write to Ewell. Now I think that this inaction was negligence. I should have at least urged the editors to get in touch with Ewell. Also, I now understand that, probably, the whole editorial board should have reviewed the essays at some point, since they engage the extremely sensitive topic of race and the work of a scholar (Ewell) who is courageous enough to publicly show his vulnerability in his SMT keynote.

I also think that a lack of formal communication between the advisory board, the editorial board, and the editors is part of a larger problem. Throughout the three years I have been a member of the editorial

board, communication has been extremely inconsistent and unclear. At times, Jackson sends emails, often enormously voluminous, to multiple board members and non-JSS-affiliated UNT faculty, and it is unclear whether a response would be just in the spirit of friendship and collegiality, or whether this is official interaction between JSS officers and board members. Jackson's emails and his Schenker-style graphs attached to them are sometimes so big that it even seems irresponsible to send them and to expect people to read them. It is disrespectful of his colleagues' time. Further signs of inconsistency: in the summer 2017, Jackson asked me to review and/or proofread the entire (!) issue of JSS that was to come out that summer, within one day's notice. Putting off other duties, I read much of the issue within one day of his message and gave substantive comments, after which Jackson informed me that the journal issue has already gone into print, and my comments are too late. I have never felt as unappreciated as I did on that day.

In short, the communication between the advisory board (*especially* Jackson) and the rest of the JSS team is far from ideal. The role of the editorial board is unclear, and Jackson's actions often blurs the boundary between the JSS editorial board and UNT theory faculty.

(I must also say that I was an anonymous reviewer for one of the articles in the latest JSS issue, "The tour-of-key model" by Nicholas Stoia. This review process was very well organized and caused no problems. My contact during this review process was Benjamin Graf.)